

Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

The 2010 Flood: Lessons Learned

Tuesday, May 11, 2010

RI Department of Transportation

Division of Highway & Bridge Maintenance

360 Lincoln Avenue

Warwick RI, 02888

AGENDA

Attendance

Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth H. Roberts MG Robert T. Bray

J. David Smith Ed Johnson

Mayor Scott Avedisian Town Council President Joseph Reddish III

James H. Thomas Thomas Hoover

Terrence Gray Paul Annarumo

Darren Delaney Jason Rhodes

Bruce Rutter Lori Needham

John Cronin Paula McFarland

Joanne McGunagle Alysia Mihalakos

Steve Florio Peter Gaynor

Jeff Kelly Lawrence Macedo

Gregory Scungio Joseph Cournoyer

Donald Pryor Randall Ricketts

Kevin Essington James Lanni

Amy Grzybowski Alan Seitz

Claudia Staniszewski Leo Messier

Robert Church Stephen Kavanagh
Robert Johnson Joseph McCooey
David Fisher Jim Ball
Geof Milner Robert Seltzer
Kim Harris W.R. Bessette
Brian Pires Normand Menard
Vincent Marzullo Richard Brown
Robert Seltzer Susan Earley
Vladimir Ibarra

**I. Brief Business Approval/ Attendance-Lt. Governor Elizabeth
Roberts**

Legislative Update/2010 Vigilant Hope Exercise:

Lt. Governor Roberts provided a legislative update regarding the March decision of the Council to send a letter of opposition to H7537 (which would remove the statutory requirement that RI cities and towns maintain local EMAs). Chairwoman Roberts informed the Council members that a letter opposing the legislation was submitted to the Honorable Representative John J. McCauley Jr., Chairman of the House Committee on Municipal Government and that she was glad to report that the legislation had been held for further study. Lt. Governor Roberts thanked the membership, including Steven Preston and Jason Rhodes, for their advocacy. She reported that she looks forward to continuing this kind of collaboration and coordinated

advocacy to enhance emergency management functions in Rhode Island.

Chairwoman Roberts praised the efforts of the U.S. Coast Guard (Captain R. Perry & Erin Lambie) and R.I. National Guard for hosting twelve support teams from the region for the Vigilant Hope Exercise. The Lieutenant Governor reported that she was very impressed with the Vigilant Hope exercise and particularly the level of commitment demonstrated by the participants.

FLOOD SUMMARY COMMENTS -

Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth H. Roberts, RI EMAC Chair:

Lieutenant Governor Roberts discussed the circumstances surrounding the flooding and recognized the resilience of the many Rhode Islanders who were forced to leave their homes and found themselves at the recovery shelters throughout the state. She has been encouraged by coordinated efforts of a wide range of agencies at the Joint FEMA/State Disaster Recovery Center, who have been actively assisting in each stage of the flood recovery. The Lt. Governor stated that the flooding has challenged Rhode Islanders during an already-tough time in the state. She introduced the discussion for this meeting and asked that it be viewed as an

opportunity to take a moment to reflect and to refine best practices for working together going forward to ensure even closer coordination between the public and private sector participants at the municipal and state levels.

Chairwoman Roberts thanked and complimented all flood emergency responders and federal partners for the high caliber of their work and the high level of professionalism throughout this flooding “crash course.”

Major General Robert T. Bray:

General Bray reiterated the Lt. Governor’s message, thanking and complimenting all responders and federal partners for a job well done. He stated that the team building approach has paid off during these past months and that the flood also provided an opportunity to assess how we can do things better.

The General stated that FEMA has been a great partner, providing a robust team to assist the emergency responders in our state. The General also commented that the response phase is easier when compared to the longer and arduous process of recovery which will go on for an indefinite period and will no doubt prove very costly. For example Tennessee is still recovering from their disaster after many months. He also noted that hurricane season is right around the corner so this is the ideal time to focus on lessons learned from this most recent flooding disaster.

The General commended those who played a role in the last two emergency management exercises: Quahog & Vigilant Hope. The

General stated that in 2012 the R.I. National Guard will again host Vigilant Guard, which is a multi-state major exercise.

II. After the Flood: Lessons Learned

Session 1: Municipal Perspective

Panelists:

Mayor of the City of Warwick - The Honorable Scott Avedisian started by estimating that his city has incurred \$22 million to \$26 million in damage to city infrastructure, including the wastewater treatment plant and an animal shelter. The Mayor noted that sanitary facilities in homes and businesses were very seriously affected due to the necessity to impose a moratorium on flushing toilets. Most residents were asked not to flush toilets for the duration of the flooding and restaurants had to be creative with their own infrastructure.

The Mayor reported that he was able to maintain open lines of communication with RI EMA for guidance throughout this process. One of the key lessons learned in Warwick was that the Reverse 911 was very effective. This and other communication tools provided ready access to disseminate information to businesses that were not open or a text message to city residents would have been key. The Mayor will also convene a process to look at zoning and planning as Warwick was among the communities that learned that better planning and development regulation will be necessary to ensure that future development is not placed in the path of floods.

Richmond Town Council President, the Honorable B. Joseph Reddish, III

Town Council President Reddish discussed some of the challenges faced by smaller communities, including not having a full time town EMA administrator nor a full time person to coordinate communications. The volunteer firefighters and the staff at the Department of Public Works in Richmond worked continuously on the roads to make sure that they had access to emergency response. Richmond experienced approximately five million tons of water flowing into their community. One of the challenges Mr. Reddish noted was the relative lack of media attention and visibility in smaller communities. Another challenge was the limited means of communicating with residents who needed updated information. Going forward he would like to make sure that all council members have the capability to access one another via conference call/800 number. The DPW and EMA director worked effectively to ensure that gravel, dirt, and truck drivers who were needed were promptly available. He felt that given the challenging environment everybody responded well. FEMA has been very helpful with their checks and support staff.

West Warwick Town Manager, James H. Thomas

Town Manager Thomas reminded members that we had two storms back to back and then we were hit again by the most serious flooding.

He felt that constant communication was the key to success in this instance. He reported that he held a meeting with department heads

at five o'clock on Sunday and started looking at weather patterns. Early Monday morning he informed businesses located in Natick to move their equipment to higher ground which turned out to be an important notification. Mr. Thomas reported that he found it challenging not to have the reverse 911 system and therefore West Warwick is exploring the possibility of implementing reverse 911, perhaps utilizing a grant. On a lighter note he pointed out that it was fortuitous that the meteorologist Tony Petrarca is from West Warwick so he was able to continuously reach out to him for weather information/updates. Mr. Thomas' house is located close to the Laurel Avenue Bridge and at one point his wife called him stating that the National Guard had just informed her that they had three minutes to evacuate. He felt that this may have been a bit of a problem in terms of the accuracy of the assessment due to the fact that many residents were disrupted but ultimately the bridge did not collapse. The Town employed the community center as a Joint Emergency Shelter and this center also served as the regional shelter for that area of the state. He noted that the Red Cross struggled to access sufficient numbers of volunteers for this particular shelter and commended Director Smith for being available throughout the crisis.

Going forward he is concerned about the potential for future flooding of the Pawtuxet River and about four thousand tons of silt and sand that were deposited during this flood. He reported that he has reached out to the Congressional Delegation in order to seek support for dredging the river. He also noted that some businesses have chosen to permanently relocate. In summary he rated the overall

flood recovery experience as difficult but was grateful that his community started planning before the storm hit.

Coventry Town Manager, Thomas Hoover

Town Manager Hoover, stated that the best way to handle an emergency on this scale is to be prepared. Coventry covers sixty-four square miles, mostly in a rural area. Due to flooding the community lost about 30 to 35 percent of road access. Mr. Hoover commended Ron Desilva, town emergency manager, and Bob Seltzer as they were working 24/7 throughout the crisis. The town was able to evacuate 250 homes in five different areas. Although they lost the Harrisville Station, the coordination with the EOC and FEMA worked well. The National Guard was very helpful with traffic control, evacuating people and with sandbags. The partial collapse of the Laurel Avenue bridge provided some challenges but things could have been much worse; if the dam had been lost they would have had a nine foot wave. Town Manager Hoover thanked RI DOT Director Michael Lewis for speaking to the council. According to Mr. Lewis, the Laurel Bridge will be taken down.

Mr. Hoover also noted that Reverse 911 was very helpful. Thanks to that system the town was able to evacuate around 2400 people around Johnson Pond.

Some of the lessons learned in regards to mitigation will be to carefully examine zoning and development, including condemnation and removal, to keep the flood areas open. He noted that given the historic nature of the flooding the response was extremely effective

and admirable overall.

The Lt. Governor acknowledged Richard Brown, City Manager for East Providence and asked if he had any feedback/input. Mr. Brown stated that the damage to his city was not as severe as that for his partners in government who had already spoken and noted that he was glad to be only listening rather than presenting.

The Lt. Governor also asked Robert Johnson, Town Manager in Exeter if he had any questions/concerns. Mr. Johnson brought up his concern regarding the reimbursement of the volunteer firefighters. He had spoken to several FEMA representatives and it seemed that there is currently no reimbursement process for volunteer firefighters, although some of these individuals were working 24/7. He would like the council to support their efforts going forward. He was saddened that the only gesture he could provide to them was a congratulatory dinner.

Lt. Governor thanked the entire panel for their time and stated that in subsequent sessions the Council would have the Statewide Response subcommittee looking at the mitigation issues.

10:00 – 10:50 a.m.

Session 2: Statewide Perspective

Moderator – J. David Smith, Executive Director, RIEMA

Director Smith reported that he had attended flood mitigation meetings with the RI Economic Development Corporation business and IRS. Director Smith noted that because of the President declared Rhode Island to be in a state of disaster, Rhode Island businesses will receive special consideration when deducting damages for tax purposes.

Panelists:

Rhode Island Department of Health, Alysia Mihalakos, Deputy Chief CEPR

Ms. Mihalakos reported that HEALTH saw that the H1N1 effort as a health care service region model that worked. Those newly establish relationships helped immensely with the coordination of, for example, the flood related needs of nursing homes. Ms. Mihalakos was very impressed by the incident command structure at Westerly hospital as Westerly communicated well with South County Hospital. A good zoning and development strategy was that the hospitals were built on hills, unlike some nursing homes. One of the lessons learned from the exercises was that HEALTH had been able to test communication tools prior to the event. She reported that in regards to communication, the 800 MHz system worked well. She also noted that the RI Special Needs registry was highly effective as a tool for reaching out to people who might need to be evacuated. People were pleased and thankful for the contact from the Special Needs registry. The registry is now up to three thousand users strong. One of the

challenges going forward will be to determine how to facilitate better communication with different agencies, keeping up with communication and situational awareness. A concern was that the strongest partners involved in the situation are local responders. This calls the question on creating planning groups with an appropriate makeup. Director Smith agreed with that assessment and stated that this would be part of an after action report.

Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, Terry Gray, Assistant Director

Assistant Director Gray described DEM as a kind of dual mission agency, as one part is focused on natural resources, parks and recreation and the second part deals with the regulatory side. The natural resource management function of the DEM took a huge hit with the flood, including the loss of the Pawtuxet warehouse, washed out roads and bridges and nineteen dams in jeopardy.

On the regulatory side their focus was on four areas.

- a. Dam safety: the lesson learned was that the dam safety program is not ready for emergency situations on this scale. Also, DEM does not have a process to respond to calls to some communities.
- b. Oils and hazardous materials response: there were over one hundred and seventy-five incidents that required multiple visits. These included basement flooding, propane canisters and barrels.
- c. Waste water management and treatment. A task force was created to work with Warwick, Cranston, and West Warwick to ensure that they had proper resources. These communities deserve a lot of

credit for their coordinated and thorough response.

d. Public information: The drills on hurricane preparedness prepared the DEM well for the flooding. The agency knew what message to disseminate. They worked closely with HEALTH. Lessons learned included a finding that they need to funnel more information to the reverse 911 system and work closely with EPA.

Although Web EOC was helpful, DEM determined that it would be more helpful in future to have a physical presence at the EOC.

DEM determined that they some clarification in regards to when to request federal assistant versus working in the context of regular partnerships? It was reported that the long-term impact will include removing debris along the river that the agency does not currently have capacity to address. Lastly it was reported that it is not expected that there will be a long term impact on the bay but that DEM will continue to monitor water quality and environmental impact.

Rhode Island Department of Transportation - Paul Annarumo

Mr. Annarumo reported that he considered one of the biggest challenges to be the loss of infrastructure, especially loss of use of I-95 since the last time it was closed was during the Blizzard of 1978. He cautioned that hurricane season is coming up and that the flooding should heighten awareness of the threats involved with the hurricane season. The DOT experienced similar internal preparedness issues to those of sister agencies, including the drain on personnel as the emergency became of longer duration. This is

because most of the emergency responders are drawn from a small group of employees. He noted that there was a lot of successful improvisation during this emergency and that it will be useful to develop these into best practices and institutionalize the response for future emergencies. He also noted a need to improve the participation of all agencies in the EOC as not all have adequate staffing to meet the need of EOC involvement during an emergency of long duration. In regards to communication DOT relied on cellular communication but learned that it will be more effective to transition into the 800 MHz system.

Rhode Island State Police Captain Darren Delaney

Captain Delaney stated that the coordination of the emergency response in this instance was one of the best in his 23 years on the force. The State Police's major goals were to prevent the loss of life and keep the public informed, especially regarding emergency road closures. On Monday the day of storm, Capt Swanberg called all towns for needs assessments. Also, the Monday meeting at EMA was helpful. In any major operations, communication was addressed through the 800 MHz and this was effective. He noted that the flooding was happening ahead of capabilities and that while Web EOC was tremendously helpful, there is nothing better than face to face communication for certain critical issues.

Another priority for the State Police was to make sure that the

operations office had adequate and up to date information. This information function can help to address the gaps between communities. When I-95 closed 295 became a critical resource. The collaboration between DOT, the National Guard and the chiefs of police in Cranston, Providence and Warwick worked well.

RI Association of Emergency Managers (RIAEM) Jason Rhodes

Mr. Rhodes reported that he made himself available as a single coordinating voice for the community of Burrillville. Mr. Rhodes thanked the council for the legislative help referenced at the outset of the meeting, as the local EMA's played a very important role in the flooding situation. He stated that the thirty-nine EMA directors had a wide variety of challenges. Those in smaller rural communities have part time directors who also work in other capacities. There were challenges with volunteers too and with communities that did not have the option to be at the EOC. Web EOC was used as a major asset for communicating with partners in the field. The 800 MHz was extremely helpful to those communities that had the capability.

11:00 – 11:50 a.m.

Session 3: Private Sector Response

Moderator – Lieutenant Governor Roberts

Panelists:

RI Chapter of the Red Cross, Bruce Rutter, CEO,

Mr. Rutter reported that seven shelters were opened. The Westerly shelter had about fifty volunteers who met regularly and were

engaged. This model present a best practice be duplicated in other communities in the future.

The West Bay area presented the most challenges. The Red Cross has approximately twelve hundred volunteers who could cover the shelters but many were unable to get to the shelters due to the road closures. Going forward, they would like to build teams for each local area and expand the Providence volunteer base with geographically specific groups of volunteers in every region of the state. He also emphasized the importance of continuing to create exercises and activities to keep volunteers engaged – and thus available when an emergency happens. He reported the need to develop a case management grid to explain agency roles to individuals affected by emergencies. He also reported that he will be working with the local CAP agencies to coordinate more closely.

RI Broadcasters Association Lori Needham, Executive Director

Ms. Needham reported that Rhode Island Broadcasters Association is made up of all five television stations and twenty-eight radio stations.

The recent flood recovery telethon collected over one hundred and thirty thousand dollars.

One of the Broadcasters' lessons learned was there is a need to

finalize a memorandum of understanding between EMA and PEMA to get equipment installed to make the system more effective. Ms. Needham reminded participants that although Reverse 911 was pivotal, radio and television are the “landline” to most people. The cancellation system therefore needs to be up on television and station websites. Enhancing this information sharing would enable everyone to do a better job. She would like feedback from members in regard to what went well and what needs work.

RI Small Business Development Center, John Cronin, Executive Director.

Mr. Cronin stated that in future emergencies a fact sheet on the interrelationship of the SBA to FEMA would be very helpful to businesses. He emphasized that there needs to be more availability of grants for small businesses in a very tough economic climate like the one we now face. Mr. Cronin was glad to see local banks step up to extend lines of credits to businesses in need. It seemed that business came together to help one another with the recovery in a very admirable way. The Chamber network was very helpful to provide help and referrals. Mr. Cronin encouraged businesses to apply for SBA loans as the May 28 deadline was fast approaching.

The RI EDC has a new board who will work on strategic planning going forward. He also reported that during his visits to business owners he has seen a lot of emotional distress and lots of businesses that need that one-on-one interaction to deal with the psychological

impact of the crisis. He will be meeting with PEMA to build infrastructure. General Bray asked how many business were aware of the May 28 filing deadline and also if there was a way to request an extension. Mr. Cronin stated that he would reach out to the RI SBA director to expand on these issues. Lt. Governor Roberts stated that FEMA and SBA had created a media campaign to publicize the deadline and that her office would continue working in conjunction with them towards this effort. Director Smith informed members that \$4.8 M had been authorized for SBA loans to date.

RI Community Action Association Paula McFarland, Executive Director.

Ms. McFarland thanked EMAC for hosting the forum. She felt that CAP agencies needed to be at EOC in the future in order that they can enhance shelter capacity. She also noted a need for better coordination with the Red Cross in the future. FEMA has been extremely helpful with the recovery. Next week training will be offered and faith base organizations will be working together. She was glad to see local partners get involved. For example, Coastway Credit Union provided the CAP agencies with several needed items including personal care products.

RI Community Action Association, Joanne McGunagle, President.

Ms. McGunagle stated that CAP agencies have two roles: stabilization

and information. These roles could become confused at times as there seemed to be confusion in regards to who was doing what. CAP agencies can provide case management and mental health services. This was the first experience in recent memory dealing in such an intense way with the RI Red Cross and FEMA. Ms. McGunagle was concerned with individuals returning to their residence and picking up items that might be infected and thought that some public information on this topic might be helpful.

III. New Business / Members Comments and/or Suggestions

Dawn Lewis commented that the special needs registry worked great and that some of the patients needed more long term arrangements. She would like to convene a group. Lt. Governor Roberts as Chair of the Long Term Care Coordinating Council pledged the Council's help in this effort.

Mr. Steve Florio stated that the main television stations failed to provide closed captioning and we must remember that over ninety thousand Rhode Islanders have problems with hearing. Lori Needham stated that news items are supposed to be have closed captioning and will work to follow up on this item.

EMAC Minutes 060810

Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council

Meeting Notice

THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE HELD:

June 8, 2010

10:00 AM

RI Department of Transportation

Division of Highway & Bridge Maintenance

360 Lincoln Avenue

Warwick RI, 02888

AGENDA

Attendance

Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth H. Roberts

J. David Smith

Ed Johnson

Dawn Lewis

Steve Preston

Leo Messier

Steve Florio

Paul Stasiuk

Janice Pothier Pac

Jeff Kelly

Alan Seitz

Lt. James Manni

Joe McCooey

Sergio DeSousarosa

Jim Ball

James Lanni

Susan Earley

Craig Gilbert

Vladimir Ibarra

I. Call to Order/ Attendance—

Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts

Lt. Governor stated she has been impressed with the work that FEMA and the SBA have done to ensure that Rhode Island businesses and individuals receive the proper flood assistance. Furthermore, Chairwoman Roberts met with Director Smith in regards to some of the action items that arose during the last meeting and was pleased that the majority of those items were being addressed at the subcommittee level.

Lt. Governor reminded members about the upcoming Hurricane Conference and was sure that EMAC members would build upon the lessons learned for the potential of a Hurricane. On June 24th a “Flood After Action” meeting will take place at Amica by invitation only. Those wanting further information can contact the RIEMA. Lastly, Chairwoman Roberts mentioned that Rhode Islanders are currently assisting in the Gulf Coast recovery efforts with their mapping expertise.

Director Smith

Director Smith reiterated that the transition from response to recovery is a long process. In fact, today there was a meeting to convene some volunteer groups in our state. He was grateful for so many volunteers giving up their time to help Rhode Islanders.

Director Smith called on Craig Gilbert from FEMA for comments. Mr. Gilbert stated that FEMA has worked closely with the state and that mitigation has been the focus as not only do they want to provide adjustments and repair the current damage but also improve it.

Director Smith thanked Craig and FEMA for being a great partner throughout this process.

Director Smith reminded members that as of June 11 the disaster loan operations centers would close in several communities. He stated that he had apprised the town managers of West Warwick and Westerly of the situation and twenty-six kiosks would be set up throughout the state to continue to provide Rhode Islanders with assistance.

Lt. Governor asked where the kiosks would be located. Craig informed members that the information would be released shortly and it would also be posted on the RI EMA website.

II. Approval of the minutes from March 9 and May 11, 2010

Chairwoman Roberts made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 9 meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Lt. Governor suggested postponing the approval of the May 11

minutes to the next meeting. However, she noted to contact the office with amendments if needed.

III. Domestic Preparedness Subcommittee reports

A. Hospital Preparedness Working Group— Alysia Mihalakos, DOH/Dawn Lewis, HARI

Dawn stated that the work of the subcommittee could be classified in three categories.

- 1. Flu: there is no activity, only seasonal flu. However, there is some activity in the Southern part of the country.**
- 2. The application to the Department of Human Services for a 1.7 million dollars in emergency preparedness funds to go to Rhode Island. The money would go to, among other things, level one interoperability, NIMS compliance, Alternate care site and Fatality management.**
- 3. Patient tracking: the committee continues to work on the patient notification program. Warwick and Kent Hospital started on May 7th, Cranston recently joined. Over the next three months, seventy-five trucks will have laptop capability. The program is still in its pilot stages and additional money is needed. The goal is to have patient intervention and patient reporting so that communications incidents such as those developed during the Station Fire would be prevented.**

The Lt. Governor asked if there was a way to connect to the electronic health records from the trucks. Dawn replied that those capabilities are not currently available but that attaining them is one of goals.

B. Haz Mat/Decon Technical Working Group— Steve Preston, Woonsocket FD

The subcommittee continues to meet monthly and members participated in both the Quahog and Vigilant Hope exercises.

There was a CERT meeting in which their ESF 10 will be updated for large scale events. The group will participate in the upcoming Iron Man competition on July 11.

In regards to classes, by the end of the year they should be nationally certified and will have the capability to offer advance courses.

Mr. Preston spoke of an incident yesterday in which the Marine Task Force (Warwick, East Providence, Providence, and Cranston) was called because two fishermen were exposed to Mustard Gas. The incident took place in neighboring New Bedford and he was glad that everything worked well.

Legislation: Mr. Preston was concerned with the Hazardous Waste Cleanup Law and a loop in the language that conflicts with the immunity and the duty to respond. He stated that the legislation is currently in House Judiciary and would like EMAC to offer their support. The pieces of legislation are S2437 and H8120. Lt. Governor Roberts stated that she would inquire into this matter.

C. Behavioral Health Disaster Response Network Working Group—Susan Earley, MHRH

The State of Rhode Island submitted an application to FEMA for a crisis program grant for 2.9 million to provide for support of flood

needs. They will find out the status of the application in three weeks. Some of the partial numbers from their survey assessed that 80% of Rhode Islanders will be fine. However, due to the economic crisis that number might be a lot lower.

There will be a public campaign informing the general public about Rhode Islanders helping others.

Lastly, Ms. Earley discussed some of the challenges with the cycle of trained individuals having to be released after nine months as otherwise it would be considered a sub-plantation.

D. Volunteer/Citizens' Corps Council—Vin Marzullo

Ms. Janice Pothier Pac informed members that Mr. Marzullo had been deployed for two weeks to Nashville, Tennessee to oversee some of the AmeriCorps Flood Recovery activities. Those members will be on the ground assisting with debris removal, mold removal and aiding volunteer reception centers.

The subcommittee has held several meetings with RIEMA and VOAD. The United Way's 211 system organized the volunteer efforts which have been handled mostly by faith-based groups including: Southern Baptist, Lutherans, and Methodist. As of today, 953 people have applied for assistance and 40 to 50 houses have requested services due to a significant amount of mold.

Ms. Pothier Pac commented that the biggest impediment to volunteer groups coming to Rhode Island has been lodging. For example, it took the Southern Baptist three weeks to find an appropriate place.

There are some MOU's with the YMCA's to provide showers for the volunteers and there are some teams being housed at Brown University. Steve Preston offered his fire station for volunteer efforts.

Lastly, the subcommittee will assess the lack of man-power in some municipalities and will work in conjunction with local EMA's to keep volunteers engaged.

E. Law Enforcement Working Group— Lt. James Manni, RISP

The subcommittee was involved in both of the recent training exercises Quahog and Vigilant Hope.

Lt. Manni made an important observation for the ICC subcommittee about the implications of a terrorist attack and the grid capacity for effective communication. He came to the realization on Saturday night at Gillete Stadium as he was amongst 55 thousand people who where overrunning the grid and his cellular phone was down.

The subcommittee continues to provide training and will coordinate with Hazmat.

F. Port Security—Erin Lambie, USCG

No Report

G. Special Populations Working Group—Kate McCarthy-Barnett, DOH

Kate McCarthy-Barnett was out at a conference. Dawn Lewis stated that the subcommittee continues to meet bimonthly to upgrade the registry and finalizing the shelter plan.

Lt. Governor Roberts mentioned the need to raise the public profile of the registry. Dawn responded that HEALTH will launch a public campaign over the next six weeks.

H. Urban Search and Rescue—Bill McKenna, Cranston FD

Director Smith informed members that Chief Seltzer will be the contact person going forward instead of Bill McKenna. The Urban Search and Rescue subcommittee was deployed during the flood. Director Smith mentioned a legal issue with an easement and the need to work out the language. Training continues in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

I. Transportation Security Working Group—Brian Pires, ATAC/TSWG

No Report

J. Mass Casualty—Chief Robert Church, Portsmouth FD

Dawn stated that their subcommittee meeting was cancelled due to the flooding. The group continues to work on inventory and according to the figures from Massachusetts and Connecticut it would be advisable to have a need assessment to determine the best ratio for Rhode Island.

IV. New Business/ Member Comments and/or Suggestion

Director Smith informed members that recently Rhode Island received a rail ship container at no cost to the state. It will be temporarily placed at the CCRI Knight Campus and it could be utilized as a mega

shelter with capacity for 500 people.

Chief Leo Messier of the Rhode Island Airport Police apprised members of their September 18th Full-Scale Mass Casualty Exercise. He would like some volunteers and Janice offered her help towards that effort.

The Lt. Governor reminded members that the next EMAC meeting would take place on August 17 and will be an educational meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM